

T H E

C 1700

C H A R G E

G I V E N B Y

694. K. 18
5 3

Dr. *HUGH BOULTER*,

(Late Lord Bishop of *Bristol*, now)

Lord Archbishop of *ARDMAGH*,

A N D

Primate of All *IRELAND*,

T O H I S

C L E R G Y;

A T

his Primary Visitation of his Diocese, begun at
Drogheda the 16th of *July*, and continued at
Ardmagh the 22d of *July*, 1725.

Publish'd at the Request of the C L E R G Y.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBERTS, near the Oxford Arms in Warwick-Lane.
M.DCC.XXV.

(Price Six-pence.)

THE
H. A. S. E.

PRINTED BY
J. E. M. B. O. L. T. E. R.

OF THE
AND
OF THE

TO THE
G. E. M. B. O. L. T. E. R.

AT
THE
OF THE

THE
OF THE

THE
C H A R G E

GIVEN BY

H U G H,

Lord Archbishop of *ARDMAGH* and Primate of All
IRELAND,

TO HIS

C L E R G Y.

Reverend Brethren,



W H E N I consider that it was by the direction of God's Providence, without any desire or seeking of mine, that I was remov'd from the Episcopal Bench in *England* to my present Station; I am not without hopes, that he may please (how unworthy soever I may be) by his guidance and Influence to make me and Instrument of some good to this Church and Nation. It might indeed very much discourage all such hopes in me, to reflect, that I come into this Country under the disadvantage of being a Stranger; if I could not at the same time observe, that I am descended from

from the same Blood, from whence most of you or your Progenitors are sprung; that I am here under the Government of the same Prince, and (as to the main) of the same Laws, as I was before; that I am come to a Church professing the same Faith, enjoying the same Constitution, and exercising the same Discipline, with That, which I have left; that we have the same common Interest, and the same common Enemies to our happy Establishment both in Church and State, with our fellow-subjects on the other side of the water; and that our safety is so interwoven with theirs, that no ruin can overtake them, that will not equally involve us; nor can we be finally ruin'd without drawing them into the same common destruction. So that whatever Knowledge I may have brought thence, and whatever Experience I may have gain'd by governing a part of the Church there, I cannot but consider them as the better qualifying me for the trust here reposed in me. But still, I am as thoroughly sensible, as any man can be, how vastly short I fall of being such an one as this Church both wants and deserves to have set over it.

And indeed the chief qualifications, I can pretend to, are a hearty Zeal for the Protestant Religion and for his Majesty's Family, with a Diligence and Assiduity to learn and study, and a Readiness to be inform'd by you and others, wherein I may be most serviceable to this Church. And I entreat of you, that you would from time to time furnish me with what Information you can for that purpose, and would join your Prayers to God with mine, that he would dispose my Will, and enlighten my Understanding constantly to pursue those things, that may most advance his glory, and most promote the Salvation of their Souls, who are committed to my care and inspection.

As the time, I have spent in this Nation, has been too little for me to come to a knowledge of the particular Wants of my Diocese, and to consider of the most proper Remedies to be apply'd to them; I must content my self on this occasion, to put you and my self in mind of the common Duties incumbent on us both, as we are intrusted with a part of Christ's Flock.

We are the *Ministers of God and of Christ*, employ'd in their immediate service, and by them commission'd to our Work.

We are their *Messengers* to mankind, to publish glad tidings of Peace and Salvation, *viz.* God's readiness to be reconciled to them for the sake of his blessed Son, upon their Faith and Repentance.

We are the *Embassadors of Christ*, to persuade and even beseech men to be reconciled to God.

We are *Shepherds* over God's Flock, to govern them and to lead them to wholesome pastures.

We are *Stewards in his Household*, to give our fellow-servants their meat in due season.

We are *Watchmen*, appointed to warn Men of the danger they are at any time in, from their spiritual enemies.

We are *Guides*, to conduct Men in the paths of Salvation.

We are their *Instructors*, to make known to them the whole Will of God.

And our great Work is the teaching, and assisting Men to obtain the Favour of God here and hereafter, to procure the Pardon of their Sins in this life, and everlasting Happiness in the life to come.

And to enable us to perform this Work, God has by *Moses* and the Prophets, by our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles, made a full revelation of his Will to mankind; which is come down to us in the Writings of the *Old* and *New Testament*, whence we are to take those wholesome Lessons, by the religious observance of which both we and our Hearers may be saved.

And certainly, we cannot want motives conscientiously to discharge the duty of our Function; if we observe, how much we promote true Piety and Virtue, and advance God's Glory in the world by so doing; how much we contribute to the present Peace and Happiness of Men, by persuading them to live agreeably to the Commands of God, and the Precepts of true Morality; what great Benefactors we are to them, by assisting them to be eternally happy hereafter; and of what great value the Souls of Men are (which we are still labouring to save) for the Redemption of which the Son of God condescended to take our Nature, and after a poor and indigent Life, to submit to a painful and ignominious Death: And lastly, if we call to mind the great reward we shall obtain by the faithful discharge of our Office, in being admitted to the Joys of our Master, and even to higher degrees of

Glory there, than most others ; with the dreadful and severe account we must one day give, at the just Tribunal of Christ, of all the Talents by him committed to us.

If we would often and seriously reflect and meditate on these things, and endeavour to give them a due force on our Minds, we should not fail of using all diligence in our Function, of watching against whatever might tempt us to a neglect of our Duty, and of carefully studying whatever might most effectually promote our own Salvation, and the Salvation of those entrusted to our Care.

THE Qualifications absolutely required of us towards rightly performing our great Work, are a competent share of *Learning* and *Virtue*.

Now the *Learning* necessary is a Knowledge of the Will of God made known in the Scriptures; and such a measure of human Literature as may help us, the better to understand the meaning of those Writings, the more strongly to maintain the Truth of those Books and of the Doctrines contain'd in them, the more effectually to stop the mouths of Gain-sayers, the more clearly to instruct our Hearers in the important Truths of Salvation, and the more powerfully to stir them up to the universal practice of their Duty.

And consequently, as the value other Learning has in respect of us, is its subserviency to our holy Profession, it ought not to have a greater Place in our Esteem, or to take up greater portions of our Time, than (which is our main Business) the Knowledge of that Revelation, God has made of himself to Mankind. And as this is fully contained in the holy Scriptures, and as Christ himself is our only Master and Teacher, to whose Decisions we are implicitly to submit; though it be proper, and almost necessary, to use Commentaries and other Works of the Learned to help us in studying those divine Truths; yet are we (whilst we read them) to try and examine what they advance, to consider the weight of the Arguments they propose for their Opinions, to compare them with the Scriptures themselves, to see how far they agree with them, before we embrace them; and to suffer no Man's Learning, Piety, or Character, so far to carry us away,

way, as to give up our selves blindly to his Conduct, or without consideration to submit to his Decisions. But the word of God is the great Oracle we are to consult, to know what is true or false, of little or great consequence, in the affairs of Salvation; and it is by the diligent reading and meditating on that Book, by comparing one place in it with another, by drawing just Consequences from what is there certainly laid down, and by begging of God by his Spirit to guide us into the sense of those Writings antiently dictated by the same Spirit, that we may reasonably hope to arrive at that heavenly Wisdom, we ought with the utmost of our Power to labour after.

And, when we have thus plentifully stored our Minds with sacred Knowledge, we shall be able duly to instruct others, according to the natures of their Wants: We shall then have it in our Power to shew the simple Man the Way he is to walk in, to prove to our Hearers the great Truths of the Gospel, and by solid Arguments to confute the Errors advanced against them: We shall be able to fortify our Flock against the Wiles and Devices of such, as would mislead them: If any are at a loss what is their Duty in any circumstances, we shall be ready to inform them what they are to do: If any labour under terrors and uneasiness of Mind, we shall be provided with spiritual Comfort for them: If any are weak and feeble, we shall easily confirm them in the Faith: In a word, no Ghostly want will then befall our Flock, for which we shall not be furnish'd with a proper Remedy.

BUT though our Understandings should be never so much enlighten'd, yet if our Wills be not likewise reform'd and renew'd, we shall fall short of the most essential Qualifications required of us.

A good and vertuous Life is justly expected from every one, who professes to be a Disciple of Christ; but the want of it is a much greater reproach to one of his Ministers, than to a common Disciple. No Christian can, without shame, plead ignorance for the neglect or breach of his Duty; but still They can less do it, who set up for instructing others in Righteousness. Such cannot be suppos'd to be at a Loss, at any time, what they ought

ought to do, or to be ignorant of the most powerful Motives of the Gospel, to incline them to perform what God has commanded them. And therefore, their wicked Lives have always given the Enemies of Religion a Handle to blaspheme, and to speak evil of the Way of Truth. Their Vices are made Arguments to prove, that (notwithstanding their fine Speeches) they themselves believe nothing of what they teach, but that their Doctrines are purely invented to procure Profit and Honour to themselves, and the more easily to keep under and manage the deluded Multitude.

If then we would avoid the dreadful Guilt of sinning against the clear and express Knowledge of our Duty; if we would cut off an occasion of Blaspheming from those who seek it; if we would give the most convincing Proof that we believe what we teach; let us endeavour to be daily exercising our selves in the Practice of every Virtue, as well of those which immediately concern our Neighbour and ourselves, as of those which directly relate to God. And let us not content ourselves with lower degrees of Virtue, with such a measure of holiness, without which we shall scarce be able to flatter our selves with the hopes of seeing God; but let us labour after those heights that we may serve as Examples to our People; that each of us may be able, in some sort, to say to them, with *St. Paul*, *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ*.

The exact Knowledge we must be suppos'd to have of our Duty, the firm persuasion we must have of the truth of our holy Religion, the reasonable Hopes we may entertain of arriving at that unspeakable Happiness promised in the Gospel to the Righteous, and the just Apprehensions we must lye under of falling into that endless Misery there threatned to the Wicked; together with the necessity there is of our frequently thinking on the Precepts and Motives of Christianity, whilst we have occasion to instruct others about them, will make it easy for us to outstrip others in Goodness. The following their secular Employments too often carries away their Minds from ever fixing seriously on the Concerns of another Life; and the Cares of this World frequently choak the good Seed of the Word, where it has already taken root, and begun to spring up in their Hearts.

But

But our very Business and Profession, and the necessary discharge of our Office, make us from time to time think on Heaven and the way leading to it, on what is our Duty, and what must be the Consequences of our performing or neglecting it; and if, for want of applying the Doctrines of the Gospel to our own Case, we are never the better for having them so often present to our Minds, we are wholly inexcusable for our Miscarriage; or, if we do not exceed others in Virtue, who are forced (as it were) to steal time from their other pressing Employments to look after their Souls, we are but slothful Servants of our Heavenly Master.

Now, if we would thus be Examples to our flocks, we must not only abstain from all Evil, but even from every Appearance of it; we must not only practise the common and easy Virtues to which meer Decency, and the Desire of a good Character, carry many who have no great Sense of Religion, but those likewise which are more difficult, and meet with greater opposition from the Flesh we carry about us. Can it entitle us, do we think, to be Patterns of Virtue, that we are not Examples of Vice? Or, that we perform just the same as is done by Christians of the lowest form?

BUT, beside our Obligations to be Examples of Virtue in general to others, there are some particular Virtues that are justly expected from us.

The first I shall mention is, Diligence in our Calling as Ministers; whether it be abroad, by carefully discharging the several Parts of our Function, or at home, by following our Studies, and improving in Knowledge. As we have undertaken the weighty Charge of taking care of the Souls of others, we cannot be too industrious in executing this great Undertaking. And as we do not pretend to be taught by Inspiration, and are scandaliz'd when others would have it thought they are; we have nothing, but Study, to acquire and preserve such a measure of Knowledge, as may duly qualify us to be Teachers of others. And, when Divinity affords such a large Field for Enquiries and Improvements, it will be scandalous for us to live as tho' we had nothing to imploy our selves about: Not to mention, that Idleness

ness too often opens a Door to other Vices; and he is in Danger of being ill employ'd, who does not take care to employ himself well.

Cheerfulness in the Discharge of our office is another Quality expected from us; agreeably to the Advice of St. Peter, that we should *feed the Flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.* And yet it is to be fear'd, too many that are forward enough to receive the Profits attending our Employment, are not so ready to perform the Duty going along with it; but seem to grudge the pains, they are obliged to take. They go so heavily to their Work, and are in such haste to get it over, that they shew that, when they are about it, they are not agreeably employed. But certainly, if we would consider that we are serving the best of Masters, who will in the next Life abundantly reward our Labours; that we are doing the greatest Good one Man can do for another, the helping forward the Salvation of Mens Souls; and that we have voluntarily dedicated our selves to God for this Service; we should count our Employment our Honour and our Happiness, and go thorough it with a ready and cheerful Mind. I think I may rank under this Head, the performing the Offices of the Church, with a proper Seriousness and Devotion: Since, if we go through our Business with a willing Mind, and with a due Sense of what we are about, we cannot but be affected with it our selves. And this is the most likely way to affect the Minds of the Hearers; which if it be not done, we are employed to very little purpose. But, on the other side, how can we hope for Attention and Devotion in our Congregations, if we read and speak in such a Manner, as to give just Suspicions that we do not mind what we are doing our selves, and that our Hearts are any where rather than in the Service we are performing?

There is one thing I could wish we all did; which is, by our Words and Actions shewing, that we are indeed spiritually minded; that tho' we are in this Body, and by its wants are concerned in the Affairs of this World, yet our Affections are set on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right Hand of God; that our Treasure and our Heart is in Heaven; and that our
great

great Aim, in every thing, is securing to our selves a Crown of Glory. Without this, our Discourses on Religion will make no great Impression on the People. If they see us pursuing the good things of this World, with the same eagerness as those, whose Portion is in this Life; if they observe we are under as great Dejection and Sorrow upon Losses and Disappointments here, as those who have no Hopes beyond the Grave; if we shew no Concern or Thoughts about the Happiness of another Life, but when we are speaking of it in the Pulpit; can they possibly think, that the things, which are invisible and eternal, have that Impression on our spirits, which we tell them they ought to make on every one's Mind? Or that the Satisfaction of this World are so vain, so empty and unworthy the pursuit of a rational Creature, as we labour to persuade them they are? Will they not rather suspect, as some Enemies of Religion have suggested, that we are for engaging others in the pursuit of Happiness in another World, that we may with the more Ease, and the less Opposition, carve out to ourselves large Portions of the good things of this Life?

Another thing expected from us beyond others is, Peaceableness of Temper. Our great Master is the Prince of Peace; and there is scarce any thing, he has more recommended to his Followers, than Peace and universal Love, and good Will, even to the forgiving those that have injured and despitefully used us, and to the loving our very Enemies. And agreeably to his Intentions and Commands, we should labour to promote Peace, and Quiet, and Union, among all his Disciples. But, we can never hope to be either successful Preachers or Mediators of Peace and good Agreement among others, if we are not patient and long-suffering our selves; if we are not slow to Anger, not given to Revenge; but easy to be intreated, and for the sake of our Blessed Saviour, ready to forgive others, and (as far as we can) to live peaceably with all Men.

AS there have been in all Ages some, who opposed the Truths of Religion; and as there have been, from the times of the Apostles, such as have corrupted the Gospel, or have made unreasonable Rents and Divisions in the Church; it cannot be expected, that

that our own Days should be free from all Enemies to our holy Religion in general, or to the Church of which we profess ourselves Members, or from such as separate from its Communion, tho' in the main they own its Doctrines. And as, in these Parts of this Kingdom, there are great Numbers of both these latter Sorts, I think it will be very proper, on this occasion, to give some Hints of what ought to be our Behaviour to those without our Church.

Now, in the first place, we should be very desirous to bring such over to the Truth, out of good will to them, as well as other Considerations; remembering St. James's Saying, *That he that converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from Death.*

To this end, we should, as occasion offers, try to remove their Ignorance by proper Instructions, and their Errors by sound Arguments. But, whatever we attempt of this nature, must be done with all Meekness and Gentleness, with all Expressions of Kindness and good will to them, attended with a Readiness to do them all good Offices. But if we treat those, who differ from us, with Heat and Passion; if we will not suffer them to defend their Opinions with such Reasons, as they have for them; if we handle them as Persons self-condemn'd, and acting against the Light of their Conscience; if we are for anathematizing them, and consigning them to the Torments of Hell hereafter, and shew a Readiness to vex and ruin them here to the utmost of our Power; we arm them with those Prejudices against whatever we can advance towards their Conviction, which scarce any Reasonings of ours will be able to overcome: And such violent Symptoms of ill will towards them, will make them suspect, rather than seriously weigh, whatever we offer towards converting them.

In relation to great Numbers of the Dissenters in *England*, I have reason, from the Observations I have there made, to believe, that the good Lives of the Clergy, join'd with a Christian Charity, Sweetness, and Condescension towards them, even without any Arguments besides, will go further towards reconciling them to the Church, than the strongest Reasons urg'd with a Mixture of reproachful Words, or where there is Room for their being scandaliz'd at the Life of their Opponent. A great deal of the Rigour of their
Prede.

Predecessors is there abated; and many of them declare, they do not separate from the Church, because they look upon Conformity to it as absolutely unlawful, but because they esteem their own way more pure and more edifying. And wherever the like Disposition is found in any Dissenters of this Nation, Kindness and Gentleness, and the unblameable Conversation of the Clergy, will go a great Way towards drawing them over to our Communion.

You will, no doubt, before I conclude this Subject, expect I should say somewhat relating to the Papists; whose Numbers in this Country, and whose settled ill will to our *Sion*, justly demand some Consideration.

I cannot but be sensibly touch'd with Compassion for them, when I consider their Condition here; that they should live where the Gospel shines round about them, and yet be kept in Darkness and Ignorance; that they should dwell in a Land where the Word of God is open to all, and yet not dare to look into it; that they should profess the Doctrine of Christ, which leads to the greatest Holiness and Purity of Mind, and most strictly enjoins the Practice of every Virtue, and yet should place Religion in superstitious Usages and outward Observances without any inward and real Change for the better. And their Condition the more deserves Pity, as their blind Dependance on their Priests, and the false Terrors of another Life they throw in their way, to prevent their admitting any thing that may enlighten them, make it extremely difficult to mend their State.

But how much soever I may pity them, I own, I know at present too little of their Circumstances to be able to point out any thing in particular, that may be of service towards their Conversion. But this I would hope from you, my Brethren, that as any of you find any Disposition in them to enquire into the Truth, and to learn whether it lyes on their side, or on ours, you always lay hold of such a favourable Opportunity to convince them of their Errors, and to convey Knowledge to them. And I cannot but think, that if we and our Flocks led more exemplary Lives than we do, if we outstript our Adversaries as much in Virtue as we do in Knowledge, if we were more remarkably just and honest, meek and patient, compassionate and charitable, chaste and sober, pious and devout, our good Actions would make some Impression on them, and

D

incline

incline them to think that there was somewhat in our Religion beyond theirs, that made us so much better than them: And we might then, with greater Reason, hope, that God would bless our Endeavours, to bring others to embrace his true Religion.

And I particularly recommend it to you of the Clergy, by your Gentleness and Kindness to them, and by relieving them in their Necessities, to try to gain their Love and Esteem: which if you once compass, it will be no hard Matter gradually to obtain some Weight and Authority with them.

I do not know enough of the Case, to lay any particular blame on you or others, but I cannot but esteem it a reproach to the Protestants of this Country, that so few Converts have been made from Popery, in the several Seasons of settled Peace this Nation has from time to time enjoy'd. But, it will be still a greater Shame to us, if any, descended from Protestant Parents, either go over to Popery; or, tho' they keep out of the Church of *Rome*, are as ignorant of the Doctrines of Christ, as the Members of that Church generally are.

I must therefore desire of you, my Brethren, that you would be diligent, by your Preaching and otherways, in instructing your Flocks in the Principles and Duties of our holy Religion; and that you would direct and encourage them to read pious and useful Books at home for their greater growth in Christian Knowledge; and that you would carefully catechize the Children and Youth under you, clearly and familiarly explaining to them the Articles of our Faith. And I must recommend to you, that when you have laid open and confirmed to them any Doctrine of the Gospel, you would, if the Matter admits of it, shew them how those Truths have been corrupted or enervated by the Papists. For instance; when you have been teaching them that our Blessed Saviour is the great Mediator betwixt God and Men, who intercedes for us with God, and offers up our Prayers and Services to him, so as to make them accepted by him; that you would observe to them, that their Church has found out other Mediators and Intercessors, Saints and Angels, by whose interest they hope for the Divine Favour: And so, in other Doctrines, where there is room for such Observations.

And I would hope, that by thus promoting Christian Knowledge amongst your People, and by fortifying them against the Errors of Popery, you may at least effectually secure them from falling into the Snares of the Priests, who lye in wait on all sides to deceive them.

IT is so very evident that the only security we of this Nation professing the Reformation have, under God, for enjoying our Religion, Liberty, and Property, is his Majesty and his Royal Family continuing on the Throne of these Kingdoms, that I would hope there is no occasion for my exhorting you to Loyalty. And all of you, who retain any sense of Religion, cannot but know, you have bound your selves with the most sacred Ties to his Royal Family, exclusive of all Pretenders to the Crown, by the Oaths you have taken. So that I think it superfluous where the Obligations you lye under are of the greatest Weight possible, to acquaint you, that Affection to his Majesty is a necessary Qualification in all those, who expect any Countenance and favour from me.

As I have now gone through the several Points I thought proper to speak to at present, I shall add nothing farther besides most earnestly beseeching you, my Brethren, as you regard the Glory of God, and the Service of our great Master Christ Jesus, and are concern'd for the Salvation of your own Souls and of those committed to your Charge, that you would faithfully and diligently discharge the great Duty, you have taken on your selves by engaging in the Ministry.

F I N I S.



...by thus promoting Christian Knowledge
...and by joining them to the service of
...the Lord, I shall be able to do more for
...the Church, who live in wait on all this to do.

...to very much that the only security we of this Nation
...the Constitution have under God, for enjoying our
...Liberty, and property, is his Majesty and his Royal Family.
...on the point of this Majesty, that I would have
...an occasion to my honouring you to do so. And all
...no retain any kind of Religion, cannot but know, you
...and your family, as the most sacred Trust to his Majesty
...exclusive of all Pretensions to the Crown, by the Oaths
...taken. So that I think it necessary to let the
...you live and work of the greatest weight possible.
...you, that Affection to his Majesty is a necessary Qualification
...in all those, who expect any Continuance and Increase from

...have now seen through the Royal Points I thought proper
...to mention, I shall add nothing further, but let me
...thank you for my Duty as you intend the Glory of God
...and of our Great Queen, and the Church, and the
...of your own souls and of those committed to your
...and you would firmly and diligently discharge the great
...on have taken on your selves by engaging in the M-

W I M I S



